



Department of State TELEGRAM

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R 090502Z SEP 87
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4902
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KATHM
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/AMR

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E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: PREL, OTRA, AF, UR, US
SUBJECT: STAFFDEL GALBRAITH: MEETING ON AFGHANISTAN

1. SUMMARY. SFRC SENIOR STAFFER PETER GALBRAITH AND ENDOFF DISCUSSED AFGHANISTAN AUGUST 27 WITH SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS. DISCUSSION COVERED THE UN PROXIMITY TALKS, THE PROCESS OF "NATIONAL RECONCILIATION" IN AFGHANISTAN, AND RECENT INCREASED COVERAGE OF THE WAR AND ITS RESULTS IN THE SOVIET PRESS. MFA OFFICIALS STRESSED SOVIET INTEREST IN A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, BUT DID NOT DEPART FROM STANDARD SOVIET POSITIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. UN PROXIMITY TALKS

SFRC STAFF MEMBER PETER GALBRAITH MET ON AUGUST 27 WITH MFA MIDDLE EAST DEPARTMENT AFGHAN SECTOR CHIEF VYACHESLAV MILUSHIN AND COUNSELOR PHILIP SIDORSKIY TO
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DISCUSS SOVIET VIEWS ON THE PROSPECTS FOR THE UN

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PROXIMITY TALKS, WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TROOPS FROM AFGHANISTAN, AND THE POSSIBILITIES FOR A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. SIDORSKIY NOTED THAT THE UN TALKS HAD BEEN GOING ON SINCE 1982, BUT THAT IN THE PAST TWO YEARS BRINGING THEM TO COMPLETION HAD BECOME A REAL POSSIBILITY. NONETHELESS THERE WERE STILL SOME DISAGREEMENTS WHICH REMAINED TO BE OVERCOME. SIDORSKIY OUTLINED THE FOUR DOCUMENTS WHICH HAD BEEN ELABORATED AND NOTED THAT THERE WERE SOME SMALL PROBLEMS WITH THESE DOCUMENTS WHICH COULD, HOWEVER, BE RESOLVED RELATIVELY EASILY. THE MAJOR BLANK WHICH REMAINED TO BE FILLED IN WAS THE TIMETABLE FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET FORCES. THIS WAS A COMPLICATED PROBLEM. THE PAKISTANI SIDE HAD DEMANDED A PURELY LOGISTICAL TIMETABLE OF SEVEN MONTHS. THE DRA SIDE, FOR ITS PART, HAD OFFERED EIGHTEEN MONTHS. THE TIMETABLE WAS A DIFFICULT PROBLEM. THE US AND PAKISTANI SIDES INSISTED THAT IT WAS PURELY A TECHNICAL ISSUE. SOME US SENATORS, HE NOTED, HAD MADE SPEECHES SUGGESTING THAT SOVIET WITHDRAWAL COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED IN ONE OR TWO WEEKS. SIDORSKIY SAID THAT IF THE QUESTION WERE PURELY TECHNICAL THEN WITHDRAWAL WOULD BE POSSIBLE IN A MATTER OF WEEKS OR MONTHS. THE DRA, HOWEVER, REGARDED IT AS A POLITICAL PROBLEM LINKED TO THE QUESTION OF OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE. THIS WAS AN ISSUE THAT WENT BACK TEN YEARS TO THE PERIOD BEFORE THE APRIL, 1978 REVOLUTION. ALTHOUGH THE SCALE OF INTERFERENCE HAD INCREASED SUBSEQUENTLY, ULTIMATELY, THE QUESTION OF A TIMETABLE WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT IN GENEVA. THE DRA WAS APPROACHING THE QUESTION ON THE BASIS THAT THERE SHOULD NOT BE ANY ULTIMATA. THEY WERE FLEXIBLE AND WANTED TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE

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IN CONCRETE TERMS. THE PAKISTANIS WOULD HAVE TO RESPOND IN A SIMILARLY CONSTRUCTIVE MANNER IF PROGRESS WAS TO BE ACHIEVED. IF THEY DID THEN A COMPROMISE WAS POSSIBLE.

3. ROLE OF IRAN

SIDORSKIY NOTED THAT EVEN WITH THE TIMETABLE RESOLVED, THE ROLE OF IRAN IN THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS WOULD NEED TO BE WORKED OUT. INTERFERENCE FROM THE IRANIAN

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SIDE WAS NOT ON THE SAME SCALE AS THAT FROM PAKISTAN, BUT IT EXISTED AND WOULD NEED TO BE ADDRESSED. THE SOVIETS, HE SAID, BELIEVED THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO BRING IRAN ALONG, BECAUSE THE IRANIANS HAD TOLD CORDOVEZ THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE AN OBSTACLE IF THE OTHER PARTIES WERE ABLE TO REACH AGREEMENT. GALEBRAITH ASKED WHETHER IRANIAN PARTICIPATION WAS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL. SIDORSKIY REPLIED THAT WITHOUT THE IRANIANS THE SOVIET UNION AND DMA WOULD BE FACING A SITUATION IN WHICH IT WOULD THEORETICALLY BE POSSIBLE TO TRANSFER THE BASE OF OPERATIONS BY THE ARMED BANDS FROM PAKISTAN TO IRAN. IN IRAN, THEY WOULD HAVE A LARGER GEOGRAPHICAL AREA TO OPERATE FROM AND THE PROBLEM MIGHT EVEN BE MORE DIFFICULT.

4. NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

WHEN PRESSED BY ENDOFF AND GALEBRAITH FOR SOVIET VIEWS ON WHAT KIND OF GOVERNMENT WOULD EMERGE IN AFGHANISTAN AFTER A SOVIET WITHDRAWAL, SIDORSKIY NOTED THAT THERE WERE TWO DIFFERENT ELEMENTS IN THE EQUATION. THERE WAS THE POLITICAL SETTLEMENT WHICH DEALT WITH THE FOREIGN ELEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND THERE WAS THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. AS TO THE LATTER, IT WAS ALREADY UNDERWAY

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R 090502Z SEP 87
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INFO UNMISSION GENEVA
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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y F O R M W 14360 VICE 4360
INSIDE AFGHANISTAN, BUT IT WAS CLEARLY LINKED TO THE
LARGER PROCESS OF POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. THE SOVIET
PERSPECTIVE WAS THAT THE COMPLETION OF THE DOCUMENTS
NEGOTIATED AT GENEVA, THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET FORCES
BY A TIME CERTAIN AND THE CONCOMITANT END OF OUTSIDE
INTERFERENCE WITH APPROPRIATE GUARANTEES, WOULD GIVE
A SIGNIFICANT BOOST TO THE PROCESS OF "NATIONAL
RECONCILIATION." UNFORTUNATELY, IN THE CURRENT
CIRCUMSTANCES, OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE WAS CONTINUING
DESPITE THE EFFORTS OF THE DRA TO HOLD A DIALOGUE WITH
THE OPPOSITION. NIKULSHIN ADDED THAT A NON-COMMUNIST
GOVERNMENT, LIKE THAT IN FINLAND, WAS ACCEPTABLE
TO THE SOVIET UNION. THIS WAS A LONGSTANDING SOVIET
POSITION, HE SAID, WHICH HAD BEEN EXPRESSED ON MANY
OCCASIONS. THE KIND OF SOCIAL SYSTEM OR GOVERNMENT
WHICH WOULD EXIST IN AFGHANISTAN WAS ULTIMATELY A
QUESTION FOR THE AFGHANS TO WORK OUT. SIDOROSKIY ADDED
THAT PEOPLE ON THE US SIDE OFTEN SPOKE ABOUT A
"COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT IN AFGHANISTAN." THIS DID NOT
STRICTLY ACCORD WITH THE FACTS. PERHAPS AT ONE TIME,
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WHEN THEY INITIALLY TOOK POWER, THE POPA HAD INTENDED
TO TAKE AFGHANISTAN QUICKLY ALONG THE ROAD TO

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SOCIALISM. NOW, HOWEVER, THE AFGHAN REGIME WAS RE-EVALUATING THE DECISIONS WHICH HAD BEEN MADE IN 1978. THE PDPA WAS NOW SAYING THAT THE REVOLUTION NEEDED TO FULFILL A NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC TASK AND NOT A MORE PROFOUND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION. THE PDPA REGIME HAD INTRODUCED THE LEGALIZATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES, OF WHICH THERE WERE NOW SEVERAL, AND HAD INVITED ALL POLITICAL FORCES TO ENGAGE IN A DIALOGUE. THE RESULT OF THE DIALOGUE COULD WELL BE A COALITION GOVERNMENT. THAT WOULD ULTIMATELY BE NECESSARY, BECAUSE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION COULD ONLY BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH THE MECHANISM OF SUCH A COALITION.

5. PRESS COVERAGE

WHEN ASKED ABOUT INCREASED ATTENTION IN THE SOVIET PRESS TO THE PROBLEMS OF RETURNING VETERANS AND CALLS FOR GREATER PUBLICITY FOR THE SACRIFICES MADE BY SOVIET TROOPS IN AFGHANISTAN, SIDOROVICZ NOTED SIMPLY THAT THERE WAS AN IMPORTANT PROCESS GOING ON IN THE SOVIET UNION. THIS PROCESS ENTAILED GREATER CANDOR IN ADDRESSING THE PROBLEMS WHICH THE USSR FACED. THE ARTICLES IN THE SOVIET PRESS RELATED TO THE AFGHAN WAR WERE IN KEEPING WITH THAT PROCESS.

6. BECAUSE THIS CABLE WAS DRAFTED AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF STAFFOEL GALBRAITH, IT WAS NEITHER REVIEWED NOR CLEARED BY MR. GALBRAITH. NATLOCK

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